

**DDS-South Region
Regional Advisory and Planning Council
Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2012**

Members Present: Chair Diane Martin, Jean Brookman, Michael Del Sole, April Dipollina, Susan Gardner, Loralyn Lewis, Lori Richardson, and Shannon O'Brien, Interim Regional Director, DDS South Region.

Members Absent: Carol Cooney and Danielle Sheppard.

Guests: Commissioner Terry Macy, Marie Bennett, IFS ARD; Carin Mancini, PRAT/Waiver Manager; Jeff DePina, Consumer; Mary Herron, Parent; and Lori Herring, ARC of New London County.

Minutes Recorded by Jolie Crescimano-Goss, Executive Secretary, DDS South Region

I. Chairperson's Report

- **Call to Order** – Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.
- **Meeting Guidelines** – Chair Martin reviewed guidelines for public comments and meeting conduct as set forth in Robert's Rules.
- **Citizen Comment** – None presented.
- **New Member Welcome** – Susan Gardner and Loralyn Lewis were welcomed to the meeting as newly appointed members of the Council. Each received a copy of the By-Laws, the governing statute, and the New Member Orientation Fact Sheet.
- **Introductions** – All made Introductions. Ms. Martin thanked Commissioner Macy for accepting her invitation to attend the meeting. She appreciates how busy he must be and is happy that he was able to fit the meeting into his schedule.
- **Council By-Laws** - Amendments to the Council By-Laws were discussed.

In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to amend the By-Laws to reflect the following language changes:

- 1. DMR to DDS,**
- 2. Mental Retardation to Intellectual Disability**

3. Under Procedures, I. Membership, A. **...The Council consists of family members, representatives from parent groups, an attorney per State Statute, and/or interested citizens and at least one person with mental retardation**

with

the Council consists of 10 members. Per State Statute, the local chapter of the ARC of Connecticut in the Region shall designate at least one member, at least one member shall be an individual who is eligible for and receiving services from DDS, and at least two members shall be parents of persons with intellectual disability.

Discussion ensued on amending the By-Laws to include guidelines for public comment and Robert's Rules for meeting conduct. Member Del Sole did not see the need to amend the By-Laws for these purposes.

Jolie will forward to the RAC the By-Laws of the Council on Developmental Services for their information.

- **Review of Minutes** - A review of the November 16, 2011, meeting minutes ensued. **In the presence of a quorum, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2011, meeting as presented.**

II. RD's Report

- **Commissioner's Introductory Comments** – Commissioner Macy provided an overview of his administration's goals and initiatives. His focus is putting *People and Families First* in all we do. He will also work to further the idea of a *Community of Providers*. The addition of an Individual and Family Advocate position will be key to furthering the goals of his administration. Once hired, the incumbent will be responsible for the implementation of the Five Year Plan. In developing the Five Year Plan, the Commissioner spent the first few months of his term meeting with families, providers, and individuals. The final plan resulted in 25 goals that lay out the direction of the department. Various stakeholder groups will come together to work on individual goals. Discussion focused on workforce training. Commissioner noted that Goal 24 of the Five Year Plan is to create a pilot project for a public/private partnership training initiative.

Commissioner Macy stressed how important transparency and stakeholder input is to him. The input of DDS' Self-Advocate Coordinators (SAC), who were among the first group of individuals he met with, is also a top priority. His on-going discussions with this group will direct policies and procedures. The SAC's are an extremely active group and the force behind many exciting

initiatives. Ms. O'Brien suggested having the SR SACs come to the next meeting to provide an update on their roles and initiatives.

In response to a question about family outreach, Commissioner Macy said that due to the cost of mailings, families would be responsible for staying informed by visiting the DDS website regularly for updates on initiatives. Families wishing to become further engaged should visit the *Calls for Partners* link for opportunities to join various stakeholder groups. Ms. Lewis suggested that Commissioner Macy look in to the possibility of having families, who are connected to the internet, sign up to receive emails from DDS as an effort to save the agency money on traditional mailings.

Next, Commissioner Macy discussed the budget and the need for a paradigm shift to a *Community of Providers*. DDS's current legacy systems cannot be sustained. Recently, the Governor called for another round of rescissions. DDS fared better than most with \$2.7M in rescissions and with careful management, the department does not envision having to make reductions to individual services.

Although his first nine months on the job have been challenging with budget issues, hard freezes, and the retirement of high-level staff, things are starting to fall into place. Commissioner Macy has appointed Joe Drexler to the post of Deputy Commissioner. As a longtime employee, Joe has the historical knowledge base and a strong grasp on the inner workings of the department. Commissioner Macy has also hired Michele Bacry, a former colleague, as his Executive Secretary. Interviews for the two vacant Regional Director positions are currently underway. Second round panel interviews are currently being scheduled. The interview panel will be comprised of various stakeholders. Panel recommendations will be forwarded to Commissioner Macy for final consideration. Commissioner Macy thanked Ms. O'Brien for serving as the Interim Regional Director for the South Region during this period of transition.

- **Mission/Vision Stakeholder Group Update** – A *Call for Partners* went out for the Commissioner's first stakeholders group as related to the Five Year Plan. With a focus on developing a new mission statement and vision, over 60 representatives comprised of consumers, families, advocates, and public and private employees met on January 18, 2012. The day long session was facilitated John O'Brien, a leader in the field of ID. A smaller group of stakeholders will now come together to review the day's input and draft the mission statement. The draft will be posted to the DDS website and available for comment in the near future. It was noted that Chair Martin participated in the session. Her feedback on the day was positive.

- **Executive Order #10 Update** - The issuance of Governor Malloy's Executive Order #10 impacts staff that are hired directly by DDS consumers and their families. It also impacts people who hire Personal Care Assistants through DDS. As part of the order, DDS and DSS are required to submit to the Governor's Council the names and addresses of all direct hire employees so that union representatives can contact them. DDS is notifying involved employers (individuals/families) and direct hire staff to let them know that the list is being submitted. The list is available to the public under the FOI Act. Commissioner Macy has appointed Greg McMahon, South Region Self Determination Director, to the Governor's Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council, which has been formed to look at the scope and implementation of the Order. Council meetings are open to the public. The RAC is encouraged to visit the link on the Governor's website to learn more about the future of Executive Order #10 as it plays out. Discussion ensued.
- **DDS Employee Update** – Ms. O'Brien reported that the department has received permission to fill case management, nursing, and direct care vacancies.
- **Great Expectations: Preparing Your Child with Developmental Disabilities for Employment Success** – Ms. O'Brien noted that at tonight's meeting, the Council is being provided with a copy of this booklet in follow-up to Ms. Bennett's presentation at the last meeting. The publication of this booklet is another step forward in furthering DDS' Employment First Initiative.

III. Old Business

- **DDS Creative Housing Forums Update** – Marie Bennett, Individual and Family Support Assistant Regional Director, joined the meeting to provide an update on the Council's plans to hold a series of forums on Creative Housing in collaboration with DDS. A sub-group of council members met to begin planning the forums. Other interested council members will be brought into future meetings. Members Lori Richardson and Susan Gardner requested to be included in future planning meetings. Chair Martin confirmed that there is still a lot of work to do and that she will be in touch. The forums are a starting point for opening up a dialogue on the shift to community living. There will be two forums. The first will provide families and individuals with an overview of DDS and an opportunity to learn first hand from individuals/families about housing/residential options. This first, in a series of two forums, will be held on April 19 at the Norwich DDS Office and on April 26 at the New Haven DDS Office. At the second session of housing forums, attendees will continue to hear from individuals and families about creative housing and will learn about how a community made it happen. Second housing forum dates are May 17 at the Norwich DDS Office and May 24 at

the New Haven DDS Office. Guest speakers may include Kathy Snow; author of Disability is Natural, and representatives of Sunrise Cottages in Ridgefield. The latter would address the community empowerment component. In terms of marketing the forums, a save-the-date announcement (shared at the meeting) will be posted to the DDS website, distributed thru the FSN list serve, and forwarded to case managers to share with families. A suggestion was made to add a placeholder for email addresses on the announcement, in an effort to start collecting emails for the purpose of outreach to families. Statewide forums may be held down the road. Ms. Dipollina expressed her desire to see an on-going creative housing workgroup come out of the series. Workgroup development is an area the RAC may want to take the lead on. In closing, Council members were encouraged to keep Ms. Bennett abreast of any creative housing options they hear about. She can be reached at marie.bennett@ct.gov.

IV. New Business

- **DDS-SR PRAT Process** – Carin Mancini, South Region PRAT/Waiver Manager, presented an overview of the Region’s planning and resource allocation process. The Planning and Resource Allocation Team (PRAT), meets every Tuesday. PRAT is responsible for insuring all individuals are treated fairly and equitably during the allocation of resources following a request for day and residential supports and services. Members of PRAT include the Region’s PRAT/Waiver Coordinator, Private ARD, IFS ARD, Resource Administrator, and a representative of the Public Division. Member composition is consistent among the regions.

The process starts when PRAT either receives a request for services/supports from the Helpline or the assigned case manager on the consumer’s behalf. The LON, priority checklist, the IP and a signed release must be included in all requests.

PRAT is responsible for:

- Establishing Priority levels (P1, P2, P 3, and Emergencies) for res/day supports, the allocation of resources, and HCBS waiver eligibility determination
- Reviewing previous meeting activity (provider correspondence/status of pending referrals)
- Reviewing all Emergencies
- Reviewing available resources (new/recycled dollars) and vacancies
- Reviewing Notices of Opportunities for residential openings
- Matching resources to individuals within procedures and priorities

- Annually reviewing the priority status of consumers on the Wait List and Planning List
- Reviewing the Region's goals and resources, mandates and needs at the top of the FY
- Reviewing Portability requests
- Reviewing Grad budgets and assisting with planning for Age-Outs
- Reviewing requests for additional services/supports (usually health or behavior related)

Ms. Mancini next described the CT Level of Need Assessment and Screening Tool (LON). The LON is used to determine an individual's need for supports in an equitable and consistent manner, identify risks as related to health and safety, and support the development of an appropriate and meaningful IP based on consumer goals.

Currently the South Region has 14 E's, 188 P1's, 355 P2's, and 121 P3's. Discussion ensued on E's, age-outs vs. grads, residential vs. day accounts and waitlists, and the department's three waivers. The new Employment Supports Waiver will provide an avenue for medically involved young people to receive waived services.

In closing, Ms. Mancini encouraged the Council to contact her with questions at carin.mancini@ct.gov as needed.

- **Viewing of Employment Idol DVD** – Due to time constraints, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

V. Next Meeting Date

- The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DDS South Region Advisory and Planning Council is March 21, 2012, at 6:00 p.m., at the Henry Carter Hull Library in Clinton.

VI. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by:

Jolie Crescimano-Goss

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Executive Secretary, DDS South Region